



The Young Student ;
OR,
HAPPY MEMORIES
OF
ARTHUR BARTLETT MATHER,
UNDERGRADUATE, LOND.,
SON OF THE REV. GEORGE MATHER.



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PREFACE.



FOR the gratification of many friends and admirers of Arthur, and with the prayerful hope that by God's blessing it may serve to help some other youth in the upward path of a noble and consecrated life, this little sketch has been drawn.

That it has been written under the deep shadow of bereavement and consequent prostration must be our apology for any defect.

A. M.

LIVERPOOL,

May, 1882.

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MEMOIR





EARLY DAYS.

I WALKED in my garden and looked upon a flourishing rose-bush. Many were the buds showing their first bright hues, and there was hope for the days to come. I noticed one fine and full, and giving promise of great beauty. I looked again; it was just beginning to expand its petals: passers by were arrested by its loveliness, and paused to inhale its fragrance. Yet again I returned, but it was not there. The spoiler had been and gathered my lovely bud: I mourned my loss, and many shared my sorrow.

Arthur was born in Leeds, March 28th, 1864. His infancy was marked by an unusual amount of intelligence, and his aptitude for acquiring informa-

tion so great that when not more than two or three years of age his mamma found it needful to forbid all attempts to teach him anything.

He took a great interest in hearing of heaven, and one day asked his sister if she would not like to go to heaven? 'Not yet,' was the reply. 'But would you not like to have a harp?' 'Oh, I have got a piano.' 'But would you not like to have a crown?' 'I have got a hat, and that does for me at present.' 'But would you not like a white robe?' 'I have got a white dress and a blue one too.' 'BUT *would you not like to be near Jesus?*' His sister could reply no further.

On one occasion when sitting alone with him in the nursery, I observed that he was very busy with his toys, and evidently enjoying himself greatly, when suddenly he left his play, walked as best he could to the other side of the room, and, kneeling reverently, offered his childish prayer with all seriousness, and then, rising quietly, returned to his play. Is not this just what we busy mothers and mistresses should do when the hour for secret prayer comes,—leave everything, and go away if only for a few

minutes to speak 'to Him who seeth in secret,' and then go back to our God-given work, 'openly' to receive His 'reward'?

But though Arthur took such delight in what was good, he was by no means sad or melancholy. On the contrary, he was a very bright and happy child, enjoying fun and playful mischief as other little boys.

When about four years old he began to take great delight in trying to *preach*, as he thought, exhorting sinners to repent, and all with great seriousness and even solemnity.

In other ways too was he early drawn to wish to do good. He would take little tracts or books and give them to poor children whom he saw in his walks. One day three halfpennies were given to him, and on going out he turned into a shop, bought three tracts and gave them to three poor men at work by the roadside. This was the commencement of a work which in following years he frequently practised on Sabbath afternoons. Reading was a great pleasure to him. One of his great delights was to lie on his back on the dining-room hearth-

rug with a book. *Little Arthur's History of England* was a great treasure, and was read and re-read many times. When about seven years of age he possessed unusual power of memory, and began to take some short lessons with his sister.

His next step was attending a morning school for little boys. Here he gave satisfaction and pleasure to his teacher, and received his first prize.

It was when about eight years of age that his religious ideas and feelings assumed a definite and distinct form. The Spirit of God moved upon his young heart ; he was troubled because he did not know satisfactorily that he was 'converted.' But one Sabbath morning, after listening to a sermon from the Rev. F. Briggs, he told me of the change which he felt and the satisfaction that he now had that He was God's child ; and in this happy assurance he continued to rejoice, giving evidence in a correct outward life of the truth of the blessed Spirit's work within.

From this time he never seems to have doubted the fact of his adoption into God's family. 'He grew in grace and in the knowledge and love of

Christ his Saviour.' Not long after this Arthur began to come regularly to his mother's room for religious conversation and prayer, when he was encouraged to think aloud without any fear, that he might receive suitable instruction and help in the heavenly path. He would tell her most frankly of his little difficulties, joys, and sorrows, his hopes, fears, and wishes; and many were the sweetly happy half-hours thus spent. Our removal from Birmingham to London involved a change of school, and Arthur now became the subject of many little painful persecutions because he would not be drawn aside from the path of duty. The grace of God was his strength. He had the esteem and approbation of his masters, and was successful in his work, taking several prizes, among them one for the Bible class and another for 'Good Conduct.'

His views throughout his brief life were singularly clear and settled with regard to recreation. In playhours he would play, but not unfrequently they were too long for his liking, and a book or conversation was more agreeable. He

would enjoy a good game of cricket or other healthy amusement, but he played as a Christian boy, uprightly and kindly, and would withdraw if he found there was to be any compromise of right principle. Happy is he who would rather be beaten in the game than take any unfair advantage! God's blessing will be on that boy.

The following letter written when between nine and ten years of age, and addressed to one of his sisters a short time before her home-coming for Christmas holidays, is nearly the only one we possess. Having never been away at school and, with the exception of annual visits to the sea, seldom from home, Arthur had not written many letters.

This one may be said to be a true picture of the dear boy at that period.

'November 17th, 1873.

MY DEAR MARIE,

I often wonder whether you have found a certain Friend who in bodily tribulation helps, and

in spiritual sorrow comforts you. If you pray to Him, He will give you a heart to love Him, so that when you have told Him your trouble you will be happy. You must ask Him for His Holy Spirit.

My dear Marie, you will want faith in hardships, but if you look to Him He will comfort you. I have found that Friend; no mortal man could give you the comfort He will give you. I love Him. He assures me of comfort and acceptance in the world to come. But if you will not love Him, He will assuredly cast you out into darkness. He puts down all your sins in a book, but if you believe He will blot them out. He has blotted mine out. I look upon God as a kind and great Father, and upon Jesus as a loving Brother and Mediator. You will have pleasant games, and you will feel the grace of God coming into your heart.

But now, dear Marie, I will talk of happy Christmas, its pleasures and enjoyments, and above all the joy of having a Saviour born about this time. We are going to have a Christmas-tree. As all things will not do to go on the tree we shall have stalls. I have been for a walk with the

boarders of our school. Please dress some dolls for the Christmas-tree.

Oh what jolly times we shall have of it in the holidays—jumping, running, walking, playing, reading, painting, and no more bothering Latin, syntax, and *Delectus*—nothing but enjoyment and praising God!

O Marie! How many blessings we have! We cannot count them, for, like David, we can well say, “My cup runneth over, and I will dwell in the house of God all my life!” But it is now time to get ready for school, so good-bye.

I am, in haste,

* * * *

A. B. MATHER.

P.S.—Do write me a long letter.’

It was in 1874 that he expressed a wish to become united outwardly with Christ’s Church as a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Society. After due consideration his wish was complied

with, and he received his note on trial on September 8th, 1874, and his first token of membership in December following. His conduct was most exemplary, 'adorning the doctrine of Christ.' Henceforth on all possible occasions he openly observed the Lord's death in the sacrament of His supper, and continued a faithful member of the Church. He walked humbly with God, and sought to use the powers given him to His glory. He delighted in singing hymns and in prayer, and many times did we hear his sweet voice in holy song after he had retired to rest until he sank into sound and quiet sleep. Nor was it uncommon to hear his morning song while dressing. A number of little pieces written during 1874-75 are unfortunately lost, but a dear kind friend having requested him to write something for her, he produced what he called *A Peep into Fairyland*. The subject seems to have originated in the fact that this lady had given him a microscope, which was a source of much pleasure.

He always delighted greatly in the works of nature, and had a ready eye to perceive their

beauty and utility. He felt what the psalmist said :
'All Thy works praise Thee.'

At this early period there was a beautiful consistency of life and conduct which by God's grace was sustained and continued through life.





SCHOOL LIFE.





SCHOOL LIFE.

AT the end of August, 1876, we removed to Stoke Newington, and Arthur was placed as daily pupil at Stamford Hill School under the care of an excellent Christian master, where he made most satisfactory progress, and at the age of thirteen passed the junior Oxford examination. The dear boy was very fearful that he would have failed, but on returning home from his seaside visit the first salutation from a loving sister was, 'You have passed.' The intelligence had arrived that day. This was very encouraging to him, and particularly because in this, as in all his other successes, he knew that it gave pleasure to his parents. 'Are you and papa satisfied?' he was wont to ask ;

and on being told that we were, quite so, he would smile, kiss me fondly, and say: 'That is enough.' Next to pleasing God he delighted in the approbation of his father and mother.

Arthur's next promotion was to the City of London School, where he entered upon a regular course of classical and mathematical training. He was placed on the fourth form, and was at this time fairly advanced in English studies, with Latin and French; he was progressing well in German, and had done a little in Greek.

This change was not in all respects agreeable. He found himself in competition with boys more advanced and generally older than himself. He had been accustomed to the highest places in his classes, and now he found himself near the bottom. But he was not discouraged. He threw all his powers into his work, and soon found himself rising in his class, occasionally taking the first places.

Hitherto Arthur had read very little fiction, but complying with the wishes of his master he read at intervals most of the best works of Kingsley, Dickens, Scott, &c.; but this reading was gene-

rally reserved for holiday recreation. Close application to study left little or no time for general reading during school terms. But his *Bible* was regularly read twice each day. This was a matter of conscience; and he also made time for secret prayer, in addition to morning and evening devotions. The little period usually given to this was between his return from school and his evening study, and no doubt the peace and strength and blessing then received both prepared him for and aided him in his work.

His first report was most gratifying. He had risen considerably on his form, and the first 'remark' was: 'He has done exceedingly well for a first term.' And under 'conduct' was 'unexceptionable.' In twelve months he was advanced to the *fifth*.

Arthur still occasionally amused himself with writing verses. One little piece appeared in the *City of London School Magazine*, of which the editors say: 'We have received this month a poem of merit by a young member of the fourth senior. This is the first contribution we have received from

the fourth class, and we hope that this good example will be followed by all the classes in the school.' (We give the poem, only remarking in explanation that it was originated by the classic story of Orpheus seeking to recover his wife Eurydice from the infernal regions.)

EURYDICE.

'WHENCE comes, whence comes this weird, enchant-
ing sound?

Mournful, yet sweet, it falls upon my ear.
Nearer I come, and then I hear a voice
Uttering sadly, yet with accents clear—

“Eurydice.”

'T is Orpheus, who, accompanied by his lyre,
Bewails with plaintive utterance his lost love.
Along the shores he walks from morn to night,
And hears re-echo from the rocks above—

“Eurydice.”

And on he walks, on with unflagging zeal,
On through the misty shades and nether gloom,

Singing and playing sweetly on his lyre,
Till e'en the very thunder seems to boom—
“Eurydice.”

And now he has crossed o'er the Stygian flood,
The ferryman moved by the magic power
Of the lovely strains from his sounding lyre,
And he hopes to see ere another hour—
“Eurydice.”

And as nearer he comes, “Ixion's wheel
Stands still; nay, still in the charmed air,”
And Sisyphus ceases his stone to roll,
And e'en stern Pluto sets free from his lair—
“Eurydice.”

But as a check upon their happiness,
Proserpina imposed a harsh decree,
And, in accordance, Orpheus walked before
Until unmindful he did turn to see—
“Eurydice.”

Alas! Alas! Eurydice no more
With him did walk, but vanished from his sight,

And he, compelled again in misery
To live, ceased not to cry from morn till night—
“Eurydice.”

At the end of August, 1879, another change awaited us, and it was a matter of grave consideration whether we should arrange to leave our dear boy that he might continue his studies at the City of London School or take him with us. He was doing very well and was hoping soon to take his place in the sixth, the highest form in the school, and had a fair prospect of obtaining scholarships. Eventually it was thought best to take him with us. To our decision he assented at once, believing it was the right path. Between leaving London and going to Liverpool we spent a happy fortnight at Penmaenmawr, in North Wales, greatly to dear Arthur's joy. He was a true lover of nature in her wildest and grandest forms, as well as in the chaste and delicate loveliness of the tiniest flower. He loved the sea, and would stand in rapt enjoyment when the storm-tossed billows broke in the distance or spent their fury on the rocky shore. He de-

lighted, too, in the gentle ripple of a waveless sea when clouds were mirrored on its surface. He *felt* the poetry of the scene ; he *felt* more—he saw God in His works and he *felt Him* too. He knew ‘My Father made them all.’

He loved the mountains, delighting greatly in climbing to the highest accessible point and looking round upon the extended prospect. In fact, nature in every form had joys for him. Two short weeks were soon passed, and we had to say farewell to Penmaenmawr. How little we then suspected that our dearly loved and loving Arthur would no more be with us there !

On arriving in Liverpool his father placed him at the Royal, as the best school in the city. Here too, as in other places, he soon gained the approbation of his masters. In the following spring, 1880, in compliance with the wishes of the headmaster, Arthur entered the lists for the Cambridge junior examination, and passed in the first division, with honours, in Latin, Greek, French, and mathematics. After the Easter recess he again went to work for the London University matriculation. In

this also, by God's blessing on diligent industry and perseverance, he was successful, though he had himself greatly feared a failure. He passed in the first division, and was truly thankful to God, who had so graciously helped him and given him success.

About this time a subject of the highest importance occupied his thoughtful mind, and many prayers were offered to the Head of the Church for His guidance. He had been brought to feel that God called him to work for Him as a messenger of the Gospel, but whether as a Wesleyan minister or a clergyman of the Church of England he felt uncertain. Inducements had been held out to him to enter the Church, and some of his friends thought it would suit him better than the laborious and changeful life of a Wesleyan minister; but the great question with him was: 'What is God's will in this matter—what would He have me to do?' Waiting upon God he thought he saw the moving pillar of His guidance, and decided to follow in his father's footsteps. This was his own unbiassed conclusion.

It was now arranged that he should commence the next term as a student at Wesley College,

Sheffield. Meantime he made a visit to the Isle of Man and another to Blackpool. How the recollections of those visits now return—the remembrance of his watchful and loving attentions, his thoughtful and considerate care as a travelling companion! It seemed as if every thought were for his mother's comfort and happiness.

Arrived at home we commenced preparations for his going away. Time passed swiftly. Nearly everything was done. He had himself covered and lettered his books and arranged all matters connected with desk, &c., and we were hoping for a little time of quiet enjoyment before the parting—an almost dreaded time to those whose life had been daily cheered by his sweet presence. He was himself in good spirits. He felt he was going to *work*. He was very wishful to take his first B.A. the next summer, and, contrary to his usual feeling, was sanguine in his hopes. The result of his three former examinations seemed to have given him confidence. Nor was he alone in his hopes. His friends who knew him well had high expectations concerning him.

But not as an earthly student was Arthur to labour. God had designed him for higher lessons in His own school of affliction. Here he was to be 'tried and purified and made white.' For two or three days the dear boy did not appear quite so well as usual, but there seemed nothing to cause any alarm. He wrote to his father, who was from home at the time, on September 8th as follows:—

'MY VERY DEAR FATHER,

I feel considerably better to-day, and hope soon to be quite right again. I began a satire of Horace yesterday, and have done over eighty lines to-day. I hope you are enjoying the quiet rest and bracing air of Scarborough. I got up to breakfast to-day, and really think I shall soon be quite well again. Please excuse more, and accept this with best love, my very dear father, from

Your affectionate son,

A. B. MATHER.'

A few months before the dear boy's illness he

had commenced a diary, which shows that while busily engaged in earthly studies the higher and heavenly things were not forgotten. Arthur was 'diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.' He lived in prayerful dependence on Divine help and grace, and daily were his prayers answered by an ever-faithful God. By His aid the light shone brightly in his daily life and walk. To God, and to God alone, be all the praise. A few extracts are given.

'*April 20th*, 1880.—I, A. B. Mather, a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Society, think that it would be advisable for me to 'commence a diary of my Christian life. I humbly pray that God will bless this my undertaking.

I am far from being what I ought to be. I am not sufficiently decided in my conduct and conversation as a Christian boy. Above all things I think I need perseverance. May God grant this to me! I feel that I have a Father in heaven to whom I can draw near with confidence by faith in my Mediator Jesus Christ.

April 21st.—I attended a revival service to-night. I endeavoured to work for the Master. May He bless the seed sown. Oh that in the midst of conflicting opinions I might ever flee to the strong covert of my loving Saviour's arms. "For ever with the Lord." Amen.

28th.—I have been enjoying my holidays, but I feel that I am not living close enough to God.

"Oh for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!"

I feel that personal effort and perseverance are what I most need in all matters. May the Father of all mercies grant these to me! Amen.

May 3rd.—I had a good day yesterday. Felt God's presence with me when pressing upon my Sunday scholars the importance of coming to Jesus. I feel in great need of God's help. I want to amend my ways and to lead a blameless Christian life. May God help me.

Tuesday, 11th.—I feel thankful to God for help-

ing me to work hard. I will try to work harder. I would like more time for private prayer and communion with God, but must try to do what is right in God's sight and trust Him for the rest. I think I may report progress. Oh may my Father purify me and make me more like Himself! I do love Him, but, alas! I am far from being like Him. May He help me. I trust in Him.

Monday, June 14th.—One month since I made an entry in my diary. I am trying, in God's strength, to prepare for my examination next week. Oh may He help me to do my best with all my hopes centred in an endeavour to do His will! May His love reign in my heart and guard its entrances, and may Thy Holy Spirit, O dear Father, take full possession of me, and may I be Thy child, and may my life redound to Thine own glory; for Christ's sake! Amen.

25th.—I feel to-night "safe in the arms of Jesus." I have to thank God for having brought me successfully through my examination. Oh may my soul be so perfected in His love that I may be able to stand His examination! Have heard a searching

discourse to-night from Mr. W——. Subject: "How much owest thou unto thy Lord?" I feel that I owe everything to God. I would serve Him more faithfully. Fighting is hard, yet God be praised that I can look up to Him and say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped me."

It is remarkable that while Arthur in the above brief diary regrets his want of diligence and perseverance, all his friends, and particularly they who were witnesses of his daily life, would say that he possessed those qualities in a high degree. But it serves to illustrate the excellent spirit with which God had graciously endowed him. And oh! how ready and willing is He to impart the same help and blessing to all who diligently seek Him, 'who delight in the law of the Lord!' 'He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper' (Ps. i. 3).



ILLNESS AND DEATH.





ILLNESS AND DEATH.

IT was on September 21st that Arthur expected to go to Wesley College, but on the 10th he was suddenly seized with alarming illness. The doctor was speedily with him, and everything that love and skill could do was done, but all was unavailing to effect a cure. At the commencement our dear boy was wishful for speedy recovery that no time might be lost from his studies, but ere long it was our painful duty to inform him that some weeks must pass before he could possibly be better. He who had said, 'As thy day is, so shall thy strength be,' graciously came to his aid, and he was enabled meekly and quietly to bow to His will, believing

that all 'would work together' for his good. The trial was great, but grace triumphed. Still for a time, but not long, he indulged the hope that by Christmas he might be able to work again. Week after week he grew worse, until very little hope of continued life remained. Arthur was sensible of this, but 'he knew in whom he had believed.' The sting of death had been drawn by the Saviour's dying love, and he feared not the great enemy. Towards the end of October, it seemed that the end was drawing nigh. His father was summoned home quickly from ministerial duty, and we knew not 'what a day might bring forth.' One night as Arthur lovingly kissed his younger sister, he said: 'Perhaps this is the last kiss I shall give you; I may be gone before morning.' To his mother he said: 'Mamma, if I go in the night you will know that I am happy.' But the morning dawned upon him still in the body, and many more bright mornings witnessed him still suffering, but 'richly supported and comforted.'

'Mamma,' he said on one occasion, 'I have had such a happy time with Jesus this morning;

and I felt whether to die or to live is the "good will of the Lord," and whether to worship or to serve I shall be happy: it will be best.' For our morning reading he asked to have the description of the Holy City. Seeing me turn to the book of Revelation, he said: 'I should like to have the last chapter.' But such was his weakness that while I read he sank into a light sleep. In the evening while in great pain I asked: 'Can I do anything for you, my darling?' He replied, 'Jesus loves me,' indicating that he had sweet comfort in his suffering.

At another time: 'I am so glad on your account; if I should die suddenly, you may be sure I am gone to Jesus.' Thus in his own deep pain did he endeavour to comfort others in their sorrow.

Arthur's mathematical studies had given him a great liking for proving everything on scientific principles, so that I was not surprised when one day he said to me: 'I have been trying to demonstrate my position with reference to Jesus, but I find I cannot. Human calculations fail, but I thank God *I can TRUST Jesus, and He saves me.*'

At another time : 'I have been thinking and tempted about the Jew, but I remembered, "He came to the Jew first and also to the gentile." Any way I am included in the *whosoever*,' alluding to 'Whosoever cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.'

On another occasion he said : 'Sometimes when I feel so very weary and weakly I am almost tempted to wish "to fly away and be at rest ;" but I am in my heavenly Father's hands, and He knows best.'

Again : 'God has been very near to me to-night, mamma. I have been thinking of the wonderful change that is to take place. "For when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."' He then alluded to the wonderful appearance of Jesus when on the mountain with Moses and Elias.

On another day : 'I have been thinking how very good God is to me.' We then spoke of temporal mercies, but above all the favour and smile of God. He added : 'I have "the peace of God which passeth all understanding."' "

One morning, after an allusion to having sometimes almost a wish to depart, he paused and then added : ' But perhaps I am wrong.'

On one occasion his kind doctor said to him : ' Arthur, we would most gladly make you better if we could, but we cannot. Now God loves you more than we can, and *He could* make you better ; then why is it, do you think, that He does not ?' After a brief pause he replied : ' I suppose He is educating us for a nobler life and a higher mission.' God was indeed preparing him to serve in the higher sanctuary.

His mother wrote January 9th : ' Last Friday we entered upon the eighteenth week of our dear Arthur's confinement to bed, and still he lingers, happy—very sweetly peaceful and happy—in God. I feel it much to be regretted that I have not been able to make frequent records of interesting conversations and daily experience of God's great goodness and mercy. Our dear boy has indeed been abundantly sustained and strengthened in much pain and suffering and in great feebleness. He has often been surprisingly cheerful and bright,

at times even playful. A well stored mind has furnished him with pleasant and interesting subjects for thought and meditation, but chiefly has he delighted in the Bible and heavenly themes. These have had the richest, choicest charms for him.'

About Christmas we procured for him a roll of Scripture passages with verses of hymns for every day in one month. This was a great enjoyment, and a source of comfort and edification. It was attached to his bed curtain, and the first thing in the morning he would request nurse to turn over the page and increase the gaslight while he fed on the heavenly manna. Here again were found subjects for many delightful conversations.

We were amused one day when the doctor was wishing him to take wine; he objected, and pointed to a passage on his roll to confirm his objection. He had for a long time, perhaps six years, been an abstainer on principle though not an openly pledged one; he feared to take wine lest he should acquire a liking for it, but on being told that it was simply as a medicine he consented, though still in fear. One morning he said to me: "Mamma, I am exceed-

ingly happy. I have so enjoyed that hymn, "How happy every child of grace!" &c., and especially that part—

"There my exalted Saviour stands,
My merciful High Priest,
And still extends His wounded hands
To take me to His breast."

His best seasons were the early mornings; and when nurse had left the room, he would think aloud to his mother. Those hours were richly blessed, but we pass them by. He frequently expressed his willingness 'to depart and be with Christ,' often saying, 'I am quite ready if God should call me.' But this readiness to go was not because life had lost its charms—far from this; sometimes when feeling better and there seemed some dawning of hope, he would look forward with pleasure to a return to health and the happy activities of life. He had a desire for life if God saw good to restore him, for Arthur's earthly life had been a happy one. By God's grace he had early chosen the ways of wisdom, and he had found that 'her ways are ways of pleasantness, and

all her paths are peace.' Loving and loved, his social life had been rich in happy friendships. Devoted to his studies, he had found great enjoyment in them. At times he revelled in some classic author, and in the absence of his father would come and bring to his mother some favourite or striking quotation descanting with much delight on the passages which charmed his own soul. It was evident that he had a chaste and refined sense of beauty in literature wherever he found it. But above all it was God's presence with him that made his life so happy. Through all the days of better and worse, of joyous or blighted hope, he was enabled to use his favourite expression, 'God knows best—His will be done.'

Once during the winter he heard that some young friends were preparing their skates, and he *felt* how delightful it would be to be 'sailing along the ice;' but in this, as in other things, he was most cheerfully submissive, and expressed himself as 'feeling it better to be where he was, because God had placed him there;' and very sweetly, and even brightly, did he sympathise in the enjoyment of

others, reminding him, as it did, of the bright sport which he had himself enjoyed during the strong frost of the preceding winter.

But there was a partial return of strength, and by degrees he was able to leave his bed and sit up in the room, then to come downstairs and join the family circle for some hours daily.

He wrote on April 4th to his beloved and kind master, the Rev. F. M—— :—

‘ MY DEAR MR. M——,

It is with very great pleasure I write and thank you for your repeated inquiries after my health. I am now able to sit up for two or three hours every day.

It is of course quite out of the question that I should enter the lists for the first B.A. this year ; but though, from an academical point of view, I appear to have lost time, yet I can thank God for progress in the school of Christ.

I am sincerely obliged to you for your lessons in language, and I trust that I may never forget them.

I hope that you are enjoying good health, and
with best wishes for yourself and family, especially
for a joyous Eastertide, believe me,

My very dear sir,

Yours sincerely and affectionately,

A. BARTLETT MATHER.

REV. F—— M——, B.A.'

Before his illness one of Arthur's chief amusements was music. He played the piano, being chiefly self-taught. During his illness a kind friend presented him with a French harp, with which he was greatly delighted. He soon learned to play it, and many an otherwise weary hour was beguiled by his harp and hymns, for he would mentally go through hymn after hymn as he lay propped up in bed. This he experienced to be an edifying as well as pleasant employment. Happily his memory treasured a good store of hymns.

Now his earthly harp is silent, but he strikes a sweeter and more beautiful harp above. He had not strength to sing for a long, long time, but he now joins the angelic choir and helps to swell 'the

song of Moses and the Lamb.' It is comforting in our sorrow to remember how he now revels in the minstrelsies of heaven.

As the mild spring days came on he was taken out for short and easy distances in an invalid carriage, attended by his father and sisters. He also read a good deal, and sometimes indulged in old studies for a time, but could not continue them long. His ever-active mind could not rest in idleness. Throughout his illness we often read aloud to him. He used to say, 'It helps me to forget the pain.'

On June 3rd we took him to West Kirby, hoping that the change and mild sea air might be greatly beneficial. The journey was made in an easy family coach from our own door to the house where we stayed.

The drive was most delightful, through very pretty country; and the dear boy enjoyed it immensely, and bore the effort better than we expected. To look out upon the bright, green grass with the water beyond and the noble Welsh hills, and to hear the singing of birds in the early morning with the cry of the cuckoo, &c., and to be taken out

to sit or walk occasionally on the lawn, aided by his sister—this was a bright, new life to him, and for a time there was an apparent improvement. So greatly did he feel this that in the subjoined letter he speaks of being ‘in good health.’

(The original was written in Latin and translated by his friend.)

June 15th, 1881.

MY VERY DEAR S—,

The examination day is near, therefore let your mind have rest. If you work right up to the last moment you will be muddled, the mind being wearied. If you take bodily exercise, well.

The advice that I gave you in my former letter I now repeat. “*Send books to the winds.*” If you wish, you are able, for “where there’s a will there’s a way.” Beware of overtaxing your mind. If you cram too much your mind will get quite confused. Arrange your plan, rest upon your oars. Do not get excited.

Do not forget Jacob Grimm’s law ; be able to say it, for perhaps the professors will ask you to write

it. Do not make long answers; all men do not regard patience as a virtue. Having found what you can do, write it down and make your answers as short as possible. So much for that subject. Now I turn to other things.

I have pitched my camp in a most beautiful spot. I am in good health, and am gaining strength. To-day I have been sitting for some time on the lawn, a most beautiful place. Nevertheless, I regret that you are not here. I do not know what news I have to tell you, so I will not waste your time.

I send greetings to your father and your sisters. Farewell!

ARTHUR B. MATHER.

TO MY FRIEND S—— S——.'

But after the first two weeks the improvement did not go on, and he began to feel increased weakness. We returned at the end of three weeks, and Arthur was glad to feel himself at *home* again.

And now all the fond hopes of loving and admiring friends were soon to be fatally crushed. In a fortnight from our return he began to decline

again. On the Sunday a dear young friend who loved Arthur very much came to see him. After tea they had music, his sisters and friend singing for him. At service time one of his sisters and his friend left to attend divine worship. He then asked his elder sister if she would play and sing Mrs. Hemans' 'Better land.' She did so. 'And now,' he added, 'give me "He was despised."'

This was the last earthly music to which he listened ; but now, 'far beyond the clouds and beyond the tomb,' he dwells in 'the better land,' and in rapt vision looks upon 'the once despised and rejected,' but now the glorified Redeemer, worshipped and adored by thousands and tens of thousands of angelic beings who ever laud and magnify Him, the blessed Saviour of men.

Monday our precious boy appeared still more weakly and poorly. On retiring for the night we arranged that he should be watched. His father sat up with him the early part of the night and then his elder sister took his place. Before the early morning dawned she came to tell us that dear Arthur was much worse. The doctor was sent for, and we

feared he might not see the return of day. And oh! it was indeed distressing to feel that we might never more listen to his sweet voice or look upon his dear smile of recognition, but the means used were by God's blessing successful; consciousness returned, and there was a partial improvement. Still he was a great sufferer; he could converse very little, but the same loving spirit and the same confidence in God were manifest. It was very touching when one day, while his pain was so great, his mother sat down by his side; when he tried to turn himself she asked, 'Do you want to be moved to the other side, my love?' He replied by reaching a pillow to her, saying: 'Put this at your back, mother dear.' He thought her chair was not a very comfortable one. This was but one of many beautiful instances of his self-forgetfulness for the good of others, and which followed him to the last.

His suffering was now great, and he could say but little. 'Oh,' I thought, 'what a blessing that my dear boy has not now to seek the Saviour; that all is right for heaven!' One day, as I was leaving him for a time, having kissed the dear boy, I was

turning to go away when I heard his voice: '*La paix avec vous ;*' an oft-repeated farewell between us. It sounded so natural and so like brighter days gone by.

About two days before he passed away his dear father prayed with him and asked: 'Do you feel "safe in the arms of Jesus?"' He replied: 'Yes, father.' Soon after he became unconscious, and continued so until the morning of Tuesday, the 12th July, when his purified and beautiful spirit went home to his Saviour and God, to realise the blessedness and bliss of the heavenly vision.

'Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight.'





EXTRACTS FROM
LETTERS.





EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.

Brief extracts from letters received by Arthur's parents after his death from friends who knew him well.

‘**T**HERE is a silver lining in this dark cloud. Even to the heathen it seemed as if death coming to the young was a mark of their being pre-eminently lovable and loved.

There is a fragrance about the memory of those departed young, especially where they were of great promise, that never fades. Such was your son. His life, brief as it was, seems to have been one of rare and exceptional goodness and beauty.’

‘I cannot tell you how sorry we all were to learn

from you of the death of Arthur. It must have been a very great trial to you, and the more so that he was so good and such a comfort to you both, and had by his great cleverness caused you to form such high expectations concerning him.'

'We always used to think dear Arthur was too good for this life as a child.'

The two following extracts are from ministers who knew Arthur intimately :—

'It must indeed be a bitter trial to lose so good and so very promising a son, but you have the abundant consolation of knowing that he was fully prepared for the "inheritance of the saints in light," so that "absent from the body," he is "present with the Lord." Would that more of our youth were like he was in his love and devotion to the Saviour!'

'Very sad indeed *in itself* that such a lovely boy should be stricken fatally; that such a promising bud should be nipped off as its beauties were opening; that such a scholarly genius should be smitten in his brightening career; that a youth whose

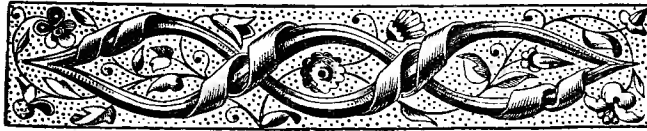
remarkable nature, capacities, and uncommon culture and acquirements were consecrated by such seraphic piety (for such was my deep impression when I heard him plead in your prayer-meeting and further observed him in your family)—yes, very sad *in itself* is the death of your precious son; and still more so in relation to the Church, which so greatly needs gifts, learning, and godliness of such brilliant hopefulness.’

‘It is indeed mysterious why one with prospects of such a brilliant life before him should be cut off when so many worthless are left. Arthur certainly was a wonderfully good lad, and he showed it always. I remember many instances of his goodness during our acquaintance in L——, and more than that, I have often felt benefited from being with him. I especially remember a walk we had together on Good Friday and a long talk. Arthur was full of his studies as a means of fitting him to do good to others; he was full of the Sunday-school and his friends at the Royal: and in each case the theme was what could he do for them.’



POEMS.





POEMS.

THE following brief and simple poems were written within the last few months of Arthur's life, when greatly enfeebled by illness. They indicate his mental and moral feeling, and exhibit the source of that calm peace and joy which made the dear boy so bright and happy to the last. 'Transplanted' was suggested by the death of a young lady, the daughter of an old friend. 'Beaconsfield' seemed to come to him almost as a little inspiration early one morning as he lay in bed.

OH, WHAT LIGHT!

OH, what light amidst the darkness
Jesus sheds upon our path !
Though that path be long and thorny,
What a blessèd end it hath !

Christian, think not of thy sorrow,
Think not of thine anguish sore ;
Soon thou 'lt reach the happy country
Where thy pain will all be o'er.

In that bright and glorious city,
With its streets of shining gold,
Filled with holy joy and gladness,
Thou thy Saviour shalt behold.

Dark and gloomy is the valley
Leading to the gates of death,
But there comes a whispered, ' Fear not ;
I am with thee,' Jesus saith.

He will guide us through the valley,
He will guide us unto death ;
Even now His arms enfold us—
Arms of love above, beneath.

ERNEST.

STILL is the darkened chamber,
And the gloom of death is cast
On all within that dwelling
Where Ernest breathes his last.

Hushed to a gentle whisper
Are the voices once so loud ;
And all who stand around him
In silent grief are bowed.

For Ernest was the sunlight
In that once happy home,
But now the final sunset
At eventide is come.

Yet gleams of sunset gladness
Brighten the sufferer's face,
For to dying Ernest's spirit
Jesus hath whispered, 'Peace!'

Then weep not, weary watchers,
But let your spirits soar

To that bright land of glory
Where suns shall set no more ;

Where Ernest now is sheltered
From every cruel blast ;
Where pleasures all exceeding
Eternally shall last.

There ye, too, soon shall follow,
If, like Ernest, ye believe
On Jesus ; He to glory
Will all of you receive.

TO A LILY.

O LILY fair, the handiwork of God,
Thou makest me think of Him whose precious blood
Can make e'en me, though dark and foul with sin,
Free from its deadly power and pure within.

I look at thee, and then my heart is free
From thought of care ; for He who clothèd thee
In thy bright robe of white will surely give
Whate'er I need as long as I shall live.

TRANSPLANTED.

'T was early spring, and the sun's warm rays
Fell athwart my garden bed;
And, lo, from the late frost-hardened soil
A snowdrop reared its head.

'T was a lovely flower, and its petals white
Were perfect in their form;
And 't were hard that the floweret now so fair
Should be dashed by a coming storm.

And I gazed on the clouds that were gathering fast,
And I feared that the tiny bud
Could not weather the blast of the fierce east wind
And the raindrops' heavy thud.

So I gathered the little blossom white
And transplanted it with care;
But the bed seemed lost without its flower,
And the earth was cold and bare.

And many a heart like my garden bed
Has a treasure lost to sight;
And a veil of gloom has been cast around
What once was pure and bright.

Yet the floweret blooms in a better soil,
'T is nipped by no cutting blast;
But the gentle zephyrs fan its leaves
Where the sunshine ne'er is past.

And the heart that in sorrow mourns its loss
Is bound to that blossom fair
By a chain of love that shall never break
Till it meets its loved one there.

POWER AND LOVE.

How good is He who rules o'er all,
And all their ways directs!
His hand upholds us on the deep,
And on the land protects.

The beasts that roar in forest glade,
The birds that sweetly sing—

All these proclaim the power of God,
And own Him as their King.

No tree grows on the widespread earth
That He hath formèd not;
He made the violets and the rose
And sweet forget-me-not.

Tempestuous howls the hurrying wind,
Impatient to be free;
God reigneth in that airy steed,
And holds in check the sea.

Wondrous His power, more wondrous far
His all-surmounting love;
'T was love that brought the Son of God
To earth from realms above.

From love to man He came on earth,
From love to man He died;
In love the great Creator deigns
In man's poor heart to abide.

Praise, land and sea, praise, beast and bird,
The Giver of all good !
And shout your loudest praises, ye
For whom He shed His blood.

BEACONSFIELD.

A MIND of purpose deep ; a mind that watched
The shadows of the future and could tell
Much of their meaning---such a mind was his.
Knowing of character, to fiction's art
He lent the genius of his pen. He knew
To bend the will of others to his own.
Imperial were his projects : who can tell
What grand results had sprung from his designs
Had he but lived ? For subtle was his mind,
Inflexible his will, and grand as great
His stern determination. But no man's power
Can turn aside the fixed dart of death.
And he is dead, but yet his spirit lives,
A principle of mighty action still.

SUNLIGHT.

How welcome is the sunlight,
Glad bird of golden wing !
Oft for my sorrow, gladness
Its flashing pinions bring.

And when my heart is clouded,
If sunlit be the sky,
My trouble seems far lighter,
Though I can scarce tell why.

Yet there are clouds that sunlight
No power has to lift ;
Then seeks my soul a higher
And far more precious gift ;

A gift that ever changes
Sorrow to gladness :
It is the blessed light of
The Sun of righteousness.

Great God, who made the sunlight,
I thank Thee for its rays ;
And to the Lamb that lighteth
Be everlasting praise.

CEDRON.

CEDRON, thy waters flow no more ;
Thy bed is dry, sad brook ;
No more upon thy limpid stream
The eye of man shall look.

Yet once by dark Gethsemane
Thy cooling waters flowed ;
And o'er thy stream have passed the feet
Of Christ, the Son of God.

Say, Cedron, didst thou think that He
Who crossed thy stream that night
Would rise amidst the world's dark gloom
A Sun to give it light ?

Didst thou in that wan Traveller see
Thine own Creator's face ?
Didst thou not rather on His brow
Furrows of sorrow trace ?

Say, why did He who made the worlds,
And gave the stars their light—
Say, why did He thy waters cross
In human form that night ?

See, where in lone Gethsemane
A suppliant Jesus kneels !
Oh, what a load of anguish there
The world's Creator feels !

Yes ; He who made the world now shall
Himself the world redeem ;
For this, O Cedron, 't was that He
That night did cross thy stream.

Yet ere He crossed, awhile He paused
Amid His followers dear ;
With words of consolation true
Their broken hearts to cheer.

'Orphans ye shall not be, for I
A Comforter will send
To teach and aid and strengthen you,
To be your constant Friend.'

Thy stream hath failed, O Cedron, and
Thy waters flow no more ;
Not so the word of Him who made
That promise on thy shore.

Thy stream hath failed, O Cedron, and
The promised Friend is come ;
And ever in the Christian's heart
He makes His constant home.

GRAZIELLA.

GENTLY the waves lave the shores of Sorrento,
And the watchfires gleam from the fisherman's
bark.

On the verge of the brine stands the fisherman's
daughter ;

She is walking with Alphonse alone in the dark.

‘ Soon must Alphonse return home, Graziella,

But thy memory ever shall bloom in my heart.

See how the watchfires shine brighter and clearer

As the bark from our vision steers farther apart.

‘ Thus shall my love to thee brighten as farther

From thee I go, for 't is but to return.’

Then did they part—Alphonse homeward to wander,

His loved Graziella in sorrow to mourn.

‘Love thou my soul,’ was the maiden’s last message
Borne to his ear as an arrow of death ;
In the cold earth now lies his still loved Graziella,
And over her grave for a funeral wreath

Grows a flowering shrub, but the soul of her lover
Is the spot where her memory e’er is kept green ;
Yes, the fisherman’s daughter, the loved Graziella,
With a true love was loved by Alphonse Lamartine.

THE WIDOW OF NAIN.

A SAD procession from the city gates
Marches in silence to the tomb,
A mournful sight ; the very air around
Is thick with gloom.
The dead unto a widow’s heart was bound
With strongest chains of love ;
But now between them lies the wall of death,
Sight to remove.

And all that love can do is to have faith,
Faith in a world to come.
Where for the widow and her son there waits
A lasting home.

No more her love can do. But in the crowd
There stands a Man whose name is Love;
And as He stands, the widow's fearful grief
His heart doth move,
With strong desire to bear to her relief,
And wipe away her tear.
'Weep not,' saith He, and as He lays His hand
Upon the bier,
'Young man, arise!' He saith with stern command,
And at His awful voice
Death yieldeth up his prey, the young man speaks;
And all rejoice.



SERMON





SERMON



NUMBER of sermons were found after Arthur's death, evidently intended as preparation work for the future. We give one to gratify some of his friends.

In this, as in other things, we have been careful not to alter any sentence or substitute other words.

'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'—JOHN iii. 3.

To a Jew, accustomed to a religion of ceremony, the idea of a religion that was a 'life' would seem very strange. But to be born surely implies to live,

so that the phrase 'Christian life' is no figure of speech, but a reality. We say then that such a life is foreign to the ideas of a ceremonial law of religion.

Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrim, or chief council of the Jews, had ideas with reference to 'the Christ' similar to those of the people in general; namely, that the Messiah would come as a glorious king to free His people from the Roman yoke. Hence he failed to recognise in Jesus of Nazareth the Son of God. But he could not deny that the miracles performed by Jesus, and to which He appealed, were direct evidence of His divine mission. Nicodemus, therefore, coming to Jesus by night, sought an explanation of this mystery. He begins by saying: 'Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'

There is no mistaking our Saviour's words. The very beginning of Christ's sentence was cal-

culated to enforce with great emphasis the coming words. The Greek phrase translated 'verily, verily' was considered among Jewish writers as equivalent to a most solemn oath. Our Saviour very frequently employs these words. When preaching elsewhere this same doctrine of regeneration in different words He exclaims, 'Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. xviii. 3).

One more instance deserves especial attention. Our Saviour, pronouncing dreadful curses upon the 'blind' leaders of the 'blind,' tells them, 'Verily, I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.' Forty-seven years later the prediction was fulfilled. Jerusalem was besieged, the siege was one of the most dreadful recorded in the annals of time. Preceded, then, by such an intensive, these words deserve our careful attention. We find that in order to 'see the kingdom of God' we 'must be born again,' or, as the marginal reading gives it, 'born from above.'

Birth may be defined as a transition from a

state of darkness or immaturity into a state of light or perfect existence. With reference to the primary state of darkness we find, 'The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.' Again we find, 'We have also a more sure word of prophecy ; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a *light* that shineth in a *dark* place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.'

This darkness is only comprehended when light is given. Convinced of 'sin, of righteousness, and of judgment,' the sinner feels the dreadfulness of his dark condition, but is unable to enjoy the light. We may, perhaps, compare the condition of such a one to that of a sleeping man conveyed into a dismal dungeon, lighted only by a flickering rush-light, and suddenly awoke.

'With broken heart and contrite sigh,
A trembling sinner, Lord, I cry ;
Thy pardoning grace is rich and free ;
O God ! be merciful to me !
I smite upon my troubled breast,
With deep and conscious guilt oppressed ;
Christ and His Cross my only plea ;
O God ! be merciful to me !'

The condition of perfect existence in the Christian life must be considered in connection with 'the kingdom of God.'

We have said that this idea of regeneration was foreign to the conceptions of the Jewish Nicodemus. He raises an objection from nature; 'Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' 'Water and the Spirit,' these are the grand agents in the work of spiritual regeneration. The meaning of this is the Spirit under the type of water. Hence baptism is the outward and visible sign of regeneration, whilst conversion is the inward and spiritual grace.

Our Saviour gives an explanation to Nicodemus. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth.' But by considering briefly the simile water we may get an idea of the principal uses of the Spirit in this work of regeneration. Water is a grand cleansing agent. And when the Holy Spirit first convinces of sin, and then applies the blood of Christ to the sin-sick soul,

the soul that was 'red like crimson becomes as wool.'

But with reference to the wind. On a stormy night we see the trees swaying to and fro, and we hear the sound of the hurricane; we see its effects in roofs torn off from houses and the forest king felled to the ground; yet can we not tell from what region comes that onward rushing air nor whither it will wend its way. In like manner we see the reckless, hardened sinner, suddenly perhaps, brought into tears by the Spirit's influence, and, it may be, made very useful in the work of God.

We see, first, his direful wickedness, then his wretchedness under conviction, then his joy in redemption, but we cannot see the Spirit's work. My friends, are you all 'born again of water and the Spirit?' There is a test for you to use if you are not certain. 'Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.' My friends, do not think that because you know on the testimony of many writers, both Christian and others, that Jesus Christ lived, and was the Son of God; because of this, I say, do not think that you are born of God.

To believe in a fact is to place confidence in the truth of the fact, and to act accordingly. But if in your hearts, by its testimony, ye believe that Jesus is the anointed of God, anointed to save His people from their sins, and if in faith you pray to Him for the remission of your sins, then He will pardon and absolve you from all your offences, and you will be, indeed, born of God. And consider what you miss by delaying to be born again—‘the kingdom of God.’ We may consider the kingdom of God first, as on earth; secondly, as in heaven.

By the kingdom of God on earth we are far from meaning an earthly kingdom. ‘The kingdom of God is within you.’ ‘The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.’ That *righteousness* we have in the Saviour’s blood.

‘Jesu, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress.’

That *peace* was the Saviour’s legacy to all His disciples. ‘My peace I leave with you.’ This joy in the Holy Ghost is founded on the knowledge of the

forgiveness of our sins and the witness of the Spirit that we are the sons of God. They are our strength in temptation, our comfort in adversity, our triumph in death; as with St. Paul we exclaim, 'O death, where is thy sting?' and 'O grave, where is thy victory?'

'Jesus the Saviour reigns,
The God of truth and love ;
When He had purged our stains,
He took His seat above.

His kingdom cannot fail,
He rules o'er earth and heaven ;
The keys of death and hell
Are to our Jesus given.

He all His foes shall quell,
Shall all our sins destroy,
And every bosom swell
With pure seraphic joy.'

This joy fills up the vacuum in the heart of every mortal who receives it. There is a vacuum, an empty space, in every heart, 'an aching void the world can never fill.'

Come with me. Let us enter this spacious

chamber, panelled with cedar, enriched with ornaments of the purest gold, and filled with all the luxuries of an eastern monarch. Here sits the ruler of a mighty empire, a man of extraordinary talent; he speaks: 'I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.'

Let us take one more journey. We enter a wretched one-roomed hut. In a corner, on a hard pallet, an old woman is dying. She has no comfort, you will say, in her dying hour. But her face is lit up with the radiant glow of heavenly peace, and raising herself up with a last effort, she gasps—

'Jesus protects; my fears, be gone!

What can the Rock of ages move?

Safe in Thy arms I lay me down,

Thy everlasting arms of love.'

This time, my friends, is one of great distress, though we may thank God that affairs are beginning to look brighter. But besides the loss of friends by the rude hand of death, besides the lack of work and the small pay, the poor man's hard-earned savings are often swept away by the break-

ing of banks, or, perchance, by the cruel inroad of the thief. But to the Christian 'there ariseth light in darkness,' our 'joy no man taketh from us.' We have our Master's warrant for its safety: 'Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal' (Matt. vi. 20).

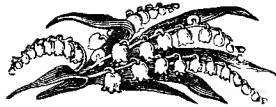
This joy, like a fire in the grate, needs fuel to keep it up. Though it cannot be stolen from us it may die of starvation. Yet the Christian must not think that he has lost his joy because he feels cast down. Doubting Castle is still in existence, but, praised be God! every Christian may by the hand of *Faith* draw out the key of *Promise* and turn it with the oil of grace.

Lastly, this joy is the legal possession of every believer. 'Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say, Rejoice.'

Such is the kingdom of God on earth. In the kingdom of God in heaven shall be assembled 'those who have come out of great tribulation,' all such as have 'washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb' (Rev. vii. 14).

‘And there shall be no more death,’ &c. (Rev. xxi. 4). The kingdom is insured for us. ‘In My Father’s house,’ &c. For you, brother, is all this prepared; you to welcome will the Saviour stand. You may receive the ‘crown of righteousness,’ and the ‘palm of victory.’ Come, then, delay not to partake of the glorious banquet. Pray that the Holy Spirit may reveal to you your state of darkness and change your heart of stone. Now see the Saviour of mankind. See Him kneeling by yon tree, mark His agony as He sweats as it were great drops of blood. All this is for you. See Him again ‘extended on the fearful tree,’ the cruel thorns piercing his sinless temples, the nails lacerating the hands that were laid so gently on the heads of the young children; see Him in His death agony stretch forth His hands to heaven, exclaiming, ‘*It is finished.*’ What is finished? Your redemption.

‘What could your Redeemer do
More than He hath done for you?
To procure your peace with God,
Could He more than shed His blood?’



A PEEP INTO FAIRYLAND

(WRITTEN WHEN TWELVE YEARS OLD.)





A PEEP INTO FAIRYLAND.

GETTING THE TICKET.

IMAGINE a little boy of twelve years enjoying his midsummer holidays. Now what do you think he did? He was not going away for a fortnight after his holidays began, so he thought he would go to fairyland. Now we will see what he saw there. How must we go? and what will the fare be? Now the fares are not according to the class you go by, but how far you advance. You might see a great deal and only pay sixpence, or you might go a long way and pay several pounds. Well, we will club together to get

five shillings, and then one of us must buy the ticket. But how shall we get it? Why, we must buy a microscope with our money, and then if we take anything, even a blade of grass, or a bit of paper, and put it under the microscope, we shall see something of fairyland, as I call it.

We will now look at several things, and first of all at a bit of spira, an everlasting plant.

GLIMPSE I.—SPIRA.

BEFORE we put our spira (which should be about half an inch long) under the microscope, we will look at its appearance. Put on a leaf, it would strongly resemble a yellow caterpillar, but close to, it looks like a bit of twine with threads projecting like tangled hair. Now we will put it under our microscope, and catch our first glimpse of fairyland. Oh! how charming! how exquisitely beautiful! you exclaim in chorus. Oh! the beautiful petals! Look at those centre stalks with balls on the top, like a beautiful honeysuckle. See how they crowd upon one another like people rushing to see some grand sight. Ah, you say, much better come with

us to see this. Here is a sight worth seeing. A bridal wreath for the queen of fairyland. Talk about wreaths, here is one, not with one or two flowers stuck here and there like ordinary wreaths, but crowded together, yet not in confusion. Let us think of Him who formed each petal so carefully, and yet there are hundreds in each plant, and hundreds of plants in the world. Must not God take care of us who are His children, and for whose sake He made this beautiful spira, which is an everlasting witness for Him; and not only this, but thousands of other things made for our use, but which we do not appreciate as we ought? But let us hasten our steps and see a few more of these wonders lying around us.

GLIMPSE II.—SALT.

HAVING seen a specimen of what grows out of the earth, we should like to see what is found in the earth, and the first we shall look at is *salt*. Putting a tiny bit of salt (a little bigger than a pin's head) under our microscope, we look through, and as for what we see I will do my best to explain,

since the beauty cannot be expressed in words. It quite equals the spira in its beauty, at least in my idea. Imagine a rough white substance rising like a mountain, with two peaks at the top, covered all over with diamonds which shine with a dazzling splendour. We will try a little experiment; take your salt and dip it in water and then examine it again. It gradually loses its lustre, and until it dries the water seems like rolling diamonds as it moves those particles of the salt which chiefly catch the light, for it is the light which causes their sparkling. From this view you may get a very good idea of what the brilliancy of the salt caverns must be. May we learn from this to let our spiritual light shine in such a manner as that it shall not diminish when cold water is showered upon us, but rather to let it shine brighter than ever. We will now arise and examine a portion of the flower garden of this wondrous fairyland of nature.

GLIMPSE III.—MIGNONETTE.

WE have now advanced a little way into this fairyland of nature, but only a little; let us suppose

that we have come to a large bed of flowers. To make this apparent, let us take a tiny flower off a sprig of mignonette, and putting it under our microscope, we perceive an object quite as worthy of our attention as the spira or the salt.

First, we see about a dozen or more beautiful flowers of a red or yellow colour, with lovely green stalks coming down to the centre from which more stalks shoot downwards, with greeny white balls, like their scarlet cousins at the top, which contrast so prettily, together with the subdued centre leaves, which incline partly to the downward flowers and partly to the upward ; while from this centre other green leaves spring out at the bottom in a basin-like shape, and the flower is here joined to a delicate little stalk which again joins another stalk, and continues this until it reaches the stem. The top flower of the stem rather differs from those here described, but when one sprig is looked at wholly it seems like a perfect tree of exquisite flowers, to gaze at which makes us exclaim with the psalmists, 'All Thy works praise Thee, O Lord!' We will now ask one of our party to pluck another

flower. Ah, this is prince's feather ; we will look at it.

GLIMPSE IV.—PRINCE'S FEATHER.

WE took the sprig and looked at one little flower, one little sprout which contains several little flowers about a pin's head size, which was certainly worth the study of any man, for it seemed like a cone of red flowers resembling an ear of corn in shape. Turning it round to obtain a better view we perceived that it resembled a Red Indian's hair (if we may trust to pictures for what a Red Indian's hair is like). We felt a great curiosity to see one of the flowers opened, and having opened one with a pin, we found it lined with yellow leaves, making as snug a little nest for a fairy insect as could be.

Having heard that a cousin of the spira, named Mr. Status, lives near here, we will undertake the great task (?) of just looking at it. He could not have removed or died, because he is everlasting. Ah, this is the house. A piece of status about an inch long. Let us call and look in.

GLIMPSE V.—STATUS.

‘WELL! your qualities are well worth the relationship of your friend Mr. Spira,’ exclaims one. ‘For my part, I think you are better looking,’ says another; but while they are continuing to flatter the beauty I will try to describe the object to which they are addressed. It appears like a long, gracefully bending stalk, with lovely flowers like closed lilies, sprouting from the stalk; these flowers had white petals at the top and green leaves at the bottom. It is needless to expatiate on the true beauties of this glorious plant, but let it teach us to pray that our souls may be kept by our Saviour as pure and white as the beautiful status which He has made.

We must now pass from the vegetable and mineral to the animal portion of fairyland, to see the fairies themselves.

GLIMPSE VI.—A FLY.

‘AH, there comes a fairy,’ says one of our party. ‘Let us catch him,’ says another. ‘Done,’ says a

third, as he brought the fairy with its rainbow-coloured wings (which proved to be a small fly). We put the fairy underneath our microscope, and lo! What do you think we beheld! What, indeed, but a lovely creature with beautiful wings, which, when the light was on them, shone with the most brilliant and exquisitely contrasted colours imaginable. Its wings joined its body just by the back, seemingly, whilst its body, which was on the breast a nut-brown colour, projected between the two wings in a rounded, conical shape, while the head was joined to the body by a neck so short and thin that with our powerful instrument you could only just see it. The head itself was of two parts, of a reddish brown colour, between which were the nose, eyes, mouth, &c. This most curious and beautiful fairy had six legs, with hair on the hip, knee, and foot, if I may use such terms for insects; the feeler seemed to consist of two bits or hairs which projected at the very 'tiptoe;' and having read about it, it gave us great pleasure to examine it for ourselves.

We will now proceed to the throne of fairyland (coral).

GLIMPSE VII.—CORAL.

WE soon made our way to the '*throne*' and saw a fine specimen of white coral; it was of a yellow white colour, and perforated all over with small holes. It looked like a tree with branches all over in its shape, and was indeed beautiful, but this is what we saw with our naked eyes only. When we put it under the microscope and saw the coral throne of fairyland, we saw a very different sight. It then appeared much whiter, and the small holes looked like pits, while the other part appeared in a coating of bees' wax (though I doubt whether coral would strengthen cotton for ladies' sewing so well as it would make them necklaces and bracelets); however, it resembled that substance strongly. To think that this beautiful substance was made by insects in such quantities as to form islands seems enormous, but here we may learn what great harm and what great good can be effected by little things.

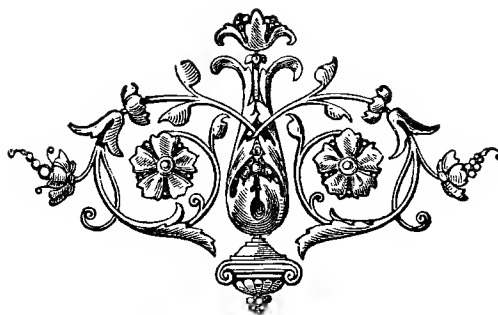
We will now take a pass to see the fairy queen, the permission to see a macaw.

GLIMPSE VIII.—THE FAIRY QUEEN.

HUSH! Step quietly and now look. ‘Oh!’ you exclaim together. How splendid! But I must try if I can picture, in a slight way, this exquisite bird. To begin with the beak. It is of a greyish black colour, and when the queen opens her sharp talons, which serve as teeth, she displays a most pretty tongue, a little lighter in colour than the beak. Its eyes are most exquisite and keen. Just above its eyes and beak is a most lovely tinted green *lawn* of feathers. The rest of the head-covering is composed of short white feathers, with a few black scattered here and there to relieve the white. This contrast looks exquisite, and with the lovely dark blue feathered back and splendid yellow or orange yellow breast, together with the gorgeous tail, appears an unsurpassed harmony of lovely tints. The widespreading wings correspond to the back and breast in the colour of their magnificent feathers, nearly a foot long in the tail. Between the breast and the inside of the tail are a few short blue feathers, making a pleasing contrast with the

yellow breast and tail. The tail is blue at the top and yellow in front; it is about a foot and a half in length, and her 'majesty's' whole length is about three or four feet. This most splendid bird has been described as seen with the bare eye, but I have one of her lovely feathers at hand. I will look at it and present it in quite a new form. The yellow side looks like a number of golden sticks laid across a piece of black silk. The blue, if you do not pull it, resembles coarse turquoise silk. If you hold the feather up to the light, the lighter part of the blue turns to dark brown, with which the right of the feather is edged. The more you observe this magnificent bird, the more you see its splendour; and we can say the same of the other things we have seen, besides thousands more which we had not time to look at.

The happy party now returned home, and it is the earnest desire of the writer that all who read this may learn to see beauty in the common objects around them, and, learning the natural works of God, to see revelations of His wisdom and love; and if this object be gained, this little book will not have been written in vain.



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